

LITTLE BIOGRAPHIES



PAGANINI

BREITKOPF PUBLICATIONS, Inc.
NEW YORK CITY

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Little Biographies

By FREDERICK H. MARTENS

with illustrations

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PAGANINI

BREITKOPF PUBLICATIONS, *Inc.*

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NICCOLO PAGANINI

IN CONSIDERING the life of this famous artist, it must always be remembered that there are two Niccolo Paganinis. The life-story of the Paganini of romance and legend is a glowing and fascinating novel of adventure, reflecting demoniac fires, for the artist was said to have sold his soul to the devil as the price of his supernatural mastery of his instrument. The biography of the real Paganini, hardly less colorful and rich in incident, is the tale of a career so astounding, a fame so universal, that practically but one other artist—Franz Liszt—holds a similar place in musical history. Paganini's creative work in music—aside, perhaps, from the "Twenty-four Caprices"—is negligible, but as an interpreter who could play on the heart-strings of every human emotion to a degree which almost justifies the tales of satanic possession circulated wherever he appeared, he knows no rival to this day. The popular phrase, "He plays like Paganini", still used to express the ultimate heights of violin playing, though the great Genoese himself has been resting in his grave for more than eighty years, is the greatest praise which may be given an interpreting artist. In noting the difference between the Paganini of legend and of actuality, it must not be forgotten that legend cannot be dismissed as irrelevant and unimportant. It stands for the crystallization of the great mass of public opinion, beneath its possible extravagances and embellishments are hidden essential truths, and this fact has been borne in mind in this story of Paganini's life. What may appear absurd or apocryphal of itself is often of value in casting a light on various phases of a strange and obscure personality, and the Paganini of fact cannot well be divorced from the Paganini of myth and fiction if the tale of his life and accomplishment is to be told in full. We must remember, too, that Paganini's musical achievement, like his life-story is phantasmagoric,

visional, a "kind of dream-picture in which truth and falsehood, elements spiritually important and alien, perhaps even unbeautiful in origin, were inextricably mingled in a strange and curious whole."



PAGANINI'S EARLY YEARS

The mysterious star of legend illumines Paganini's earliest years. What was the name Paganini but a variant of the word *pagano*, a pagan? It was rumored that Satan had watched over his birth, hailing the boy as his "snarer of souls." A visionary had dreamt that he had seen the devil play upon a violin "from which flames broke forth, and then hand the burning instrument to the child . . ." Genoa, in that last decade of the eighteenth century, was known as a city in which the evil *Madre Natura*—a secret society of heretics and devil-worshippers—celebrated its sacrilegious black masses, and struggled to undermine the beneficent influence of Holy Church and the blessings of its dispensation. It is not strange that, under the circumstances, the mysterious star of demoniac legend shone balefully on Paganini's earlier years. Born in Genoa, October 27, 1782, the son of a poor ship-chandler, Antonio Paganini, and his wife Teresa Bocciardi, the violinist himself declares that after he came into the world, "the Saviour appeared to my mother in a dream, and told her to ask some blessing of Him; she begged that her son might become a great violinist, which grace was vouchsafed her." And it is this last statement which disproves the others, for, though Paganini died without having received the supreme unction, it was only because he did not think his death was imminent, and had told his confessor that "when the moment came he would not fail in his supreme duty as a believer". And the action of the Church, after due investigation, in permitting his body; by dispensation of the Holy Father, to be laid in consecrated ground with religious rites, in his son's Villa Gaiona in Palma, effectually disposes of the tales of his satanic affiliations.

Paganini's father, a passionate music-lover, though he lacked a musical ear, taught his son the elements of violin-playing at an early age; but his first professional teachers were the not very competent Giovanni Servetto and, later, Giacomo Costa. When eight years old he had already written a violin sonata and played a Pleyel Concerto in church. Francesco Gnecco, a dramatic author, is said to have exercised an influence on his style at this period. When in his eleventh year he gave his first public concert in the Teatro San Agostino, playing his variations on the "Carmagnole," a tune very popular at the time in Genoa—which was in the fullest sympathy with the principles of the French Revolution—and exciting the interest of a certain Marquis Di Negro, who induced Niccolò's father to take him to Parma, so that he might study with "famous masters". When brought to the celebrated Alessandro Rolla, he picked up a new concerto by that composer and played it with such fire and brilliancy at first sight that Rolla's horn spectacles are said to have fallen from his nose. He cried that there was nothing he could teach the boy; yet Paganini did study with him for some months before returning to Genoa, however, and also took lessons in composition from Ghiretti. On his return to his native city he began to devote ten and twelve hours a day to the perfection of his technique, writing compositions so difficult that he alone could play them. This overindulgence in study at so early an age helped to give him a sickly, nerve-wracked constitution, and a tendency for convulsive fits, which continued through life. From 1792 to 1797 Paganini studied and played—deaf to the political turmoil of the world and entirely withdrawn from it. He was quite oblivious to the terrible siege of Genoa (1800), held by the French under Massena against the Austrians, secluding himself with his studies for days at a time. But he also began to give concerts. In November, 1800, he appeared in Lucca, with great success, as well as in Pisa, Leghorn and other Tuscan cities and—sad to say—removed from the paternal influence his life on tour was anything but edifying. He gave himself up to the hectic excitement of the gaming-table and the society of women of ill-repute, and finally, having lost even his violin at cards,

was enabled to play his Leghorn concert only because an admirer named Livron presented him with the superb Joseph Guarnerius (dated 1743) which he willed to his native city, and which is still preserved in the Municipal Palace of Genoa, where visiting renowned artists are invited to play it by the city fathers as a special mark of distinction. There is little information available as to what Paganini did between 1801 and 1805 save that (as he himself says) he "gave himself up to the study of agriculture, and learned to play the guitar," with the same virtuosity which distinguished his violin playing. The fact that his agricultural studies were pursued on the estate of a charming lady who was an enthusiastic guitarrist may, of course, have something to do with his interest in these subjects. His six sonatas for violin and guitar, Op. 2 and 3, date from this period. In 1805, Paganini once more devoted himself to concert-tours. His wanderings brought him to Lucca, where Prince Felice Bacciochi and the Princess Elisa Bonaparte, the sister of Napoleon, held their court. Here, at a nocturnal church festival, he aroused such unbounded enthusiasm among the worshippers that the brethren of the Order were obliged to leave their places to suppress the manifestations of approval.

PAGANINI AT THE COURT OF LUCCA

Paganini, appointed Solo Court Violinist and teacher to Prince Bacciochi, remained in Lucca for three years, perfecting his individual technique, and in particular, his wonderful mastery of the G-string. He has written interestingly of his stay: "My position obliged me to play two weekly concerts, and I always improvised, accompanied by the piano, for which I wrote a bass upon whose foundation I developed a theme. . . . I conducted the orchestra whenever the sovereigns appeared at the opera. The Princess Elisa, however, always disappeared before my Court concerts came to an end, since my harmonics often affected her nerves, causing her to faint when listening to me, and she withdrew rather than deprive others of the pleasure of listening to me. An especially charming lady, whom I had wor-



ACCLAMATION OF PAGANINI AT THE END OF
ONE OF HIS CONCERTS

shipped for some time in secret, was very faithful at these concerts, and I began to believe that she might cherish a hidden preference for me. Our attachment for each other increased, and one day I promised to surprise her at the next concert with a musical compliment having reference to our union of friendship and affection. At the same time I announced to the Court that I would present a 'Love Scene' as a novelty, which aroused much curiosity. Imagine the astonishment of my audience when it discovered that my violin was fitted with but two strings. I had retained only the G and the E strings; the latter was to express the maiden's sentiments, the former was to represent the voice of an impassioned lover. I had written for the purpose a species of tender, sentimental dialogue, in which the sweetest phrases alternated with jealous outbursts. There were airs which in turn caressed and deplored; there were outcries of rage and joy, of anguish and happiness. Of course I ended the scene with a reconciliation, in which the lovers, fonder of each other than ever, carried out a *passo a due* ending with a brilliant Coda. The 'Scene' was well received, and I shall say nothing of the glances cast at me by the lady of my thoughts. The Princess Elisa, after paying me the greatest compliments, very graciously remarked: 'You have accomplished the impossible with two strings, would one string suffice for your talents?' I promised to make the attempt. The idea appealed to my imagination, and in the course of a few weeks I composed a sonata for the G string which I gave the name of 'Napoleone', and which I played on August 26 before a splendid and numerous gathering of the Court. The success I scored exceeded my expectations, and from that day dated my preference for the G string." In Florence, whither Paganini followed the Princess Elisa when she became Grand-Duchess of Tuscany in 1809, he "became the object of fanatical admiration", and in 1810 he played for the Court, for the first time, those Variations on the G string which have a range of three octaves, secured by means of harmonics. This novelty was prodigiously successful when he introduced it at a concert in Parma in 1811.

From 1808 to 1813, Paganini flitted hither and thither in Italy, playing here, there and everywhere, in Lombardy and in the Romagna, in Cesena, Rimini, Ravenna, Forli, Inola, Faenza, etc. It was an age lacking in communicational facilities; there was neither telegraph nor telephone; rumor rather than newspapers supplied the world with its fact and fiction; and transportation had not as yet added the railroad to its resources. The difficulties of keeping track of Paganini during this period of his life has even led certain old biographers to declare that the years from 1808 to 1813 represent another mysterious break in his existence. It is where fact is hard to establish that imagination may run riot most extravagantly. In this period are placed most of the sinister rumors, the satanic legends which Paganini himself, while he denied them, did not disdain to use to advertise his art. In Heinrich Heine's "Florentine Nights" we find some delightful echoes of these fanciful imaginings: Lyser, the deaf painter, who has drawn the "fabled features which appear to belong to the sulphurous realm of shadows" is speaking to the poet: "Yes, my friend, what the whole world declares, that he sold himself to the devil, body and soul, in order to become the best of violinists to fiddle together millions, and, first of all, to escape from the galley where he had already languished many years, is true. For, look you, my friend, when he was conductor in Lucca, he fell in love with some princess of the theater, became jealous, . . . stabbed his faithless love to death in good Italian style, was sent to the galleys in Genoa . . . and finally sold himself to the devil in order to get away, to become the greatest of violinists and be able to extort a levy of two *thalers* from each one of us here this evening." Or again, in connection with his impresario, George Harry: ". . . a sanguinary contract binds him to this servant, who is in reality none other than Satan. . . . the devil has merely borrowed Mr. George Harry's form, and the poor fellow's wretched soul in the meantime has been locked up with some other trash in a chest in Hanover, until the devil give it back its fleshly envelope." Paganini categorically

denied the apocryphal tales of an eight years' captivity as a galley-slave, the love-romance terminating in an assassination, and other stories in a letter published in the Paris "Revue Musical" in the year 1831, and implies that some of the adventures ascribed to him happened to the Polish violinist Durand or Duranowski, a restless and revolutionary spirit, said to have been affiliated with the Italian *Carbonari* and other incendiary organizations of the time. That he was not blind to the advertising value of these fables, however, is proved by another incident, told by Regli: "One day Paganini sat at dinner at Trieste, together with a numerous company. Before the conclusion of the meal he suddenly leaped up and cried out despairingly: 'Save me, gentlemen, save me from the spectre which continually pursues me! Do you not see it, threatening me with the same blood-dripping dagger with which I slew him! . . . She loved me . . . and she was innocent! . . . Ah, two years of imprisonment will not atone: my blood must be poured out to the last drop!' With these words he seized the knife lying before him. As may be easily imagined we hastened to grasp his arm. Terror and consternation were visible in the faces of the assembly; but they were soon reassured when the pretended Othello once more took his seat, and devoted himself to the gastronomic pleasures, showing that his intention merely had been to make those who spread such fictions about him ridiculous. The fact remains, however, that the theater (in which Paganini played in Trieste) the following day, was not large enough to contain the audience which gathered, and more than a thousand persons had to be turned away and comforted with the possibility of hearing him at his next concert." The demoniac reputation popularly ascribed to him did not leave him on his triumphal concert tours of Europe. In Vienna, where he played the Rode Concerto, "the burning southern ardor of the Italian singed the old-fashioned web of Rode's passage-work with the flames of the nether world, with the passion of Corsican vendettas and of Sicilian siroccos." In Leipsic, a critic thought it necessary to prove that in reality there was nothing diabolic in Paganini's playing, but that on the contrary it was extremely *human*. His

playing in Carlsbad is supposed to have enraptured the young Chopin, and the dangerous music of his art to have had its share in evoking in the Polish master's soul the romantic, vampire-world of his plaintive music; while in Prague it was whispered that he was the Golem, the Wandering Jew. In Paris, where Paganini visited the house of the cabbalistic magician Cagliostro, he was said to have participated in demoniac incantations and black rites to raise the reputed treasures of the Count of Saint-Germain, golden bars, statues and shrines, chests of ducats, gems, bronze, etc., including the rich jewels of the pagan temples which the Emperor Julian the Apostate had concealed from the Christian bishops. . . . And yet, in reality Paganini had been made a knight of the Golden Spur by the Holy Father, and it had been said of him that "Niccolo Paganini plays Gothic minsters on his violin, his thrills are clouds of incense . . ." The violinist's apparently supernatural gifts, his cadaverous, spectral appearance—especially after a lesion of the jaw, due to an unsuccessful operation, made it necessary for him to have his teeth extracted—his long bony fingers, his whole weird and repulsive personality, all played their part in creating the Paganini legends, which a less credulous day dismisses with the amused tolerance their piquancy and color provoke. His life was a dissolute one, yet the great violinist was not irreligious; if he failed in conduct he did not in belief, and the Church which examines the hearts as well as the deeds of its followers, has freed his memory from all suspicion of diabolic affinities.

PAGANINI'S TRIUMPHS IN ITALY

Until the year 1828, when he undertook his first European tour, Paganini triumphed over all rivals in his native land. Leaving the service of the Princess Elisa in 1813—he had refused to doff the gold-embroidered coat of a captain of *gendarmerie*, an honor she had bestowed on him, in order to play for her in evening dress—he wrote his famous "Le Streghe" (The Witches' Dance) and promenaded it throughout Italy, often playing it on a single string, after having cut the

three others with a pair of scissors in view of the audience. In Bologna, (1814) he improvised in his concerts, with Rossini at the piano; in Rome the Papal Vicar (afterward His Holiness Pope Leon XII), granted him a special dispensation to give concerts during the Fridays of the Carnival season, a very special privilege. In the same year he played in Milan (with his pupil Catarina Carcagno); in 1815 concertized in the Romagna; and in 1816 triumphed in a competitive concert over the French violinist Lafont. Lafont was declared his equal in *cantabile* playing, but Paganini was immeasurably his antagonist's superior in spirit and technical perfection. In Venice he met Spohr, who after paying tribute to his merits declares ". . . what interests the general public, however, lowers him to the rank of a charlatan, and does not make up for his defects; a strong tone, large bowing and a song phrasing which is wanting in good taste." In Milan, Genoa, Placentia, Turin, Florence and Verona, Paganini startled and delighted his hearers, and in the last-mentioned city (1817), won a victory over the Polish violinist, Lipinski, as he had done in the case of Lafont. He continued his triumphal career within the limits of his native land until 1828, maturing his vast technical resources, and generally acclaimed as the first of Italian violinists.

THE CONQUEST OF EUROPE

The "Magician of the South" achieved an unparalleled triumph at his opening concert in Vienna, where he was acclaimed "King of the Violin". Five feet five inches in height, his face long and pale, with strongly marked features, a great nose, eagle eye, long, curly black hair, he was unnaturally thin, and "two furrows, which might be said to have been graven by his exploits—for they resembled the F-holes of a violin—were sunken in his cheeks." His playing provoked an enthusiasm beyond measure, and his second concert was attended by all the members of the Imperial family present in the capital. Succeeding concerts only confirmed the impression already made. Everything in Vienna was *à la Paganini*; the dishes on the restaurant

bills of fare; the ribbons and scarves worn by the women; pipes, cigars and snuff boxes; even billiards were played *à la Paganini*. The Emperor of Austria gave him the great gold medal of St. Salvator, and the title of Court Virtuoso. A much-needed rest cure at the Carlsbad baths was followed by a visit to Prague, whence Paganini returned "loaded with laurels and florins". Then came concerts in Dresden, Leipsic, Hamburg, Berlin, where, according to critics he "realized the impossible"; and in Warsaw and Frankfurt-on-the-Oder, where Chopin took part in his concert; but his precarious health, undermined by his toil and excesses, forbade a proposed journey to Russia. He returned to Berlin "from Warsaw, whither he had been summoned", as he wrote a friend, "for the coronation of the Tzar Nicholas as King of Poland", and after playing in a number of German cities, including Munich and Stuttgart, the illness of his son Achillino, who accompanied him everywhere, having deferred his visit to Paris) finally appeared before a Parisian audience on March 9, 1831. There was the usual chorus of praise, the usual chorus of attacks, but Paganini left Paris after a series of performances in April, having scored an artistic and a financial success. England came next: there the press was not disposed to favor Paganini and freely discussed his "insolence", his greed and the fact that though his English concerts (he also played in Dublin and in other Irish cities) brought him the sum of £20,000, he had not once played for charity. The accusation of "insolence" was due to the fact that when King George IV, in the cheap and niggardly manner so in keeping with his character as Thackeray has described it, offered Paganini half the honorarium the artist had demanded—£100—for an appearance at Court, the Italian replied: "Your Majesty can hear me for considerable less money if you care to attend one of my concerts at the theater!" The winters of 1833-4 (in 1832 Paganini returned to Italy and bought a Villa near Parma) Paganini spent in Paris, making another London concert trip between, and in 1834, when at the zenith of his fame, Berlioz wrote for him the famous "Harold en Italie" symphony. In 1835, he played for the ex-empress Marie-Louise in Parma (she made him

a chevalier of Saint-George in 1836), and received a ring adorned with diamonds, and in Genoa, at a solemn banquet given him by his fervent admirer, the Marquis di Negro, in his villa known as "The Terrestrial Paradise", near Geona, Paganini's bust in marble was solemnly dedicated with poems and eulogies inspired by his European triumphs. Yet his star was on the decline: his health was failing. In 1838 he experienced large financial losses owing to the failure of the Paris "Casino Paganini", a gaming house which was refused a license by the French government, and this aggravating his constitutional disorder, laryngeal phthisis, he died after much suffering in Nice, where he had taken refuge, on May 17, 1840. To Antonia Bianchi, the mother of his son Achillino—his sole heir—and to his sisters, he left legacies, his son coming into an estate of some £80,000. As on earth he had never been able to rest long in one place, so after death his corpse was a wanderer. The Bishop of Nice, since he had died without absolution, could not permit Paganini's burial in consecrated ground. Pending the reply to the appeal his legal executors had made to the Cardinal-Archbishop of Genoa, that he might be buried with the blessing of the Church in his native city, the body was temporarily deposited in the hospital of Villafranche; and later provisionally buried outside its cemetery. According to another (and probably apocryphal) account, it was for a time buried on the little island of Saint-Ferreol, whence six years later it was transported to Italy. An excavation in the middle of this islet is still known as "Paganini's Hole". More exact, probably, is the statement that his body was removed from Villafranche in 1843 to be taken to the Villa Polevra, a property belonging to the Paganini family, near Genoa, where the Holy Father had authorized a provisional inhumation. The body was exhumed in 1853, to be once more laid to rest in the Villa Gaiona in Parma, in accordance with the rites of the Church. In 1876 the remains were once more exhumed, to be reburied in the cemetery of Parma. Yet even then Paganini was not to rest in peace. In 1893, his coffin was once more opened, in the presence of his son and the Hungarian violinist Ondricek; and in 1896, another exhumation was made

necessary owing to the creation of a new cemetery in Parma. It is to be hoped that this may be the last, and that his mortal clay has now been left to repose in peace.

PAGANINI, THE MAN AND THE VIRTUOSO

Paganini lived in a time whose moral level falls considerably below that of our own. It was the age of the French Revolution and Empire, when the pleasure-loving traditions of corrupt eighteenth-century aristocracy and princely social circles still set an example followed by all who were able to do so. The pursuit of facile beauty, the excitement of the gaming table, the indulgence of each and every material enjoyment were the order of the day. Paganini grew up amid the license of a great seaport town, his youthful trend to dissipation was not corrected by maturer years, and undoubtedly shortened his life. His savage and morose appearance is said to have been belied by a gay, witty and happy disposition, so far as his intimates were concerned. In spite of his constant ill health, his outlook on life was cheerful; he had a capacity for generous impulse, and his avarice would appear to have been exaggerated. It was rather, after he had commenced to garner the golden shower which rewarded his public appearances, a consistent economy which strove to preserve for the son whom he adored, the fortune within his grasp, the more so that he had carelessly flung away all he made in earlier years. His love for his son Achillino (who was fourteen when his father died) is, perhaps, the finest and noblest trait of his character. He carried the boy about with him everywhere, played with him in all his leisure moments, and never spoke a harsh or unkind word to him. For all that Paganini asked excessive prices for admission to his concerts, it should be remembered that at a time when the upper social circles in every land were under the impression that the artist existed only for their amusement and entertainment, this only amounted to a defence of his own dignity and that of his art. When it came to distributing free tickets to students and poor music-lovers, he was invariably generous.

As a violinist Paganini was the inaugurator of an epoch. He was impenetrated by music. When only five the bell-chimes of the churches were his greatest joy; "he could not hear the organ in church without being moved to tears." And what he felt himself he was able to make others feel, for in their turn his audiences wept when he played his *cantabile* passages. It is evident that Paganini when playing totally forgot the violin as a tone-producing instrument, a sign of his intellectual superiority. Guhr says that the playing of Baillot, Lafont, Beriot, Boucher and others did not much differ, while with Paganini "all is new, unheard-of . . . he opens up limitless vistas to the imagination, and gives the violin the divinest breath of the human voice, profoundly stirring the most intimate emotions of the soul." This author, after careful observation, when Paganini had refused to disclose to him his "secrets", decided that his mastery was due to: the manner in which he tuned the instrument; the peculiar bowing he employed; the mingling and uniting of sounds produced by the bow in conjunction with the left hand *pizzicato*; the use of simple and double harmonics; his playing on the G string; and his incredible *tours de force* ("stunts"). He also used weak strings, lending themselves better to the playing of the harmonics; and among a variety of different strokes of the bow, he had a remarkable *sautillé* bowing and a *staccato*. in which he *flung* the bow on the strings, "playing successions of scales with incredible rapidity." These, with a bridge less convex than that used by other violinists, especially at the E string (allowing him to touch three strings at a time in the upper positions); were all advantages carefully cultivated by Paganini. He played harmonics—chromatic scales, up and down, simple and double trills, sequences of double-stops in harmonics—with the greatest ease, though, contradicting the popular fallacy, Paganini's hand was not an unusually large one. Exercise, however, had given him a prodigious stretch, and, placing the thumb of his left hand on the middle of the neck of the violin, he could, thanks to the reach of his fingers, play at will in the first, second and third position without moving it. A violinistic comet, the superlative of violin virtuosity,

Handwritten musical notation on a page from a manuscript. The notation consists of several staves of music, written in a style characteristic of early printed music. The notes are arranged in a complex, overlapping manner, with some notes appearing to be written over others. The notation includes various rhythmic values and clefs, though the specific details are difficult to discern due to the density and overlap of the notes. The page is framed by a simple black border.

the most original of solo players, he "occupies an isolated position in the chain of musical-historical development." His stupendous technique, power and perfection of tone, passion and energy of style, which held his audiences spell-bound, have made his name a musical household word. Yet he founded no school, in spite of an individual power far transcending mere virtuosity. His influence on the violin playing of his time was most noticeable in France, "his own homeland being content with the fame of having produced him, and of possessing a pupil of his in the person of another child of Genoa (Sivori)."

PAGANINI'S COMPOSITIONS

According to a list published some ten years after Paganini's death, he wrote some fifty compositions. He himself acknowledged as authentic only the "24 Caprices" for solo violin; the 12 "Suonate per Violino e Chitarra", Op. 2 and 3; and the 6 "Quartetti per Violino, Contralto, Chitarra e Violoncello", Op. 4 and 5. The "Caprices", which Liszt and Schumann have in part transcribed for the piano, show how well he understood the art of exploiting what his predecessors had left him. In more than one respect Locatelli was his model, and that composer's long-forgotten pieces were given new life by Paganini. The first of the "Caprices" is undoubtedly modelled on Locatelli's Arpeggio-Study in his "L'arte del violino". Naturally, Paganini reclothed the suggestions afforded by Locatelli in a brilliant modern dress, and transformed them with a genial inventive spirit. The various studies bristle with technical difficulties: modulations, staccatos, double-stops, octaves—everything in fact, save harmonics. As Witting remarks: "It is strange to note that the characteristic effect which was Paganini's greatest success, the harmonics, do not appear in his "Caprices". These still hold their own in the virtuoso study literature of the violin.

Of the eight concertos which Paganini wrote—it was his custom, in his concert numbers, to write only the orchestra parts, keeping the solo part in his own head, though there were always listeners who put them down,

for better or worse, as the case might be—only two remain: the Concerto in E flat (D) Op. 6, and in B minor, Op. 7. The Adagio of the Concerto Op. 6 is a dialogue between the fourth string and the three others, and the Rondo contains some original combinations in tenths. The Second Concerto is a work rich in effects and grandiose in style, and contains the famous bell movement, the “Campanella”, which Liszt has transcribed. Nor are Paganini’s variations and other concert pieces less interesting from a technical standpoint. His variations on “Di tanti palpiti” (“Tancredi”), written in B flat minor, have a solo violin part which calls for various changes of tuning; it presents the theme simply and develops it with every mechanical means of effect. In the “Non più mesta” (“Cenerentola”), the violin is tuned as in the preceding composition, but plays in D, as in the case of the First Concerto. The second variation recalls effects already employed in other of the composer’s works; and the third is written almost entirely in octaves; the fourth is an echo variation, the echo effects being in double harmonics. This variation is followed by a Finale in thirds and octaves, very brilliant but extremely difficult to play. The popular twenty “Carnaval of Venice” variations, Op. 10, on the air of “Oh, mamma!” are not always in good musical taste; while of those on the air “Barucaba” each offers a special study for a different species of bowing, and are for the most part written in different keys. There are in addition variations on the “Prayer” from Rossini’s “Moïse,” “God Save the King”, on Mozart’s “La ci darem la mano” (“Don Juan”), the famous “Moto Perpetuo”, “Le Streglie”, (“Witches’ Dance”), and others. Of the sonatas some bear titles, such as “Varsovie”, “Marie-Louise”, “L’Orage”, “Primavera”, “Grande Sonate sentimentale”, and others do not. Violin technique has progressed to such a degree since Paganini’s time, that most of the remarkable mechanism which astonished the audiences of his day has become the common property of the contemporary concert violinist. Then, too, with the improvement of musical good taste, we are obliged to discount much in his compositions which is of a purely virtuoso character, and has no real musical value. At the same time, what he has written

proves that aside from being a genial artist he was a composer whose style—if not superior to that of his Italian contemporaries—was at any rate not inferior to it, especially where orchestration is concerned.

When Heine heard Paganini play in Hamburg, "the master violinist," so the poet-critic declares, ". . . with every stroke of his bow, called up visible figures and situations before my eyes, recounted to me in his sounding picture-writing all sorts of vivid stories, conjured up for me a sort of species of colorful shadow-play, in which he himself, with his violin playing, always acted as the leading character." As he plays, Heine sees the legendary story of Paganini's life unrolled before him in a sequence of glowing tableaux of love, assassination, and the pact with Satan in prison; sees the demoniac violinist calling up monsters out of the ocean with his music, and, finally an apotheosis, a kind of vision of Paganini transfigured, whose imaginative beauty deserves citation, and allows us to take leave of the artist in the proper mood:

"In the midst of space floated a radiant globe, and on it, gigantic and proudly upraised, stood a man playing the violin. Was this orb the sun? I do not know. But I recognized Paganini in the lineaments of the man; yet idealized in beauty, divinely clarified, conciliation in his smile. His body bloomed in all the strength of manhood, a garment of clear blue confined his ennobled limbs, his black hair flowed upon his shoulders in shining curls; and as he stood there, firm and steadfast, like some exalted divinity and played his violin, it seemed as though all creation obeyed his tones. He was the man-planet around whom moved the universe, with due solemnity and sounding forth the rhythms of bliss. Those great lights, floating about him in so calm a radiance, were they the stars of heaven, and those echoing harmonies born of their movement, was this the music of the spheres of which poets and prophets have told so many enchanting tales? At times, when I strained my eyes far out into the twilight distance, I seemed to behold nothing but white, flowing garments, in which giant pilgrims were wandering about in disguise, with white staves in their hands, and, strange to say, the golden knobs which tipped them were the same

great lights which I had thought were stars. The pilgrims progressed around the great fiddler in a wide circle, and the tones of his violin caused the golden knobs of their staves to gleam with ever increasing radiance, and the chorales which rose from their lips, and which I had thought were the music of the spheres, were really no more than the dying echo of the tones of his violin. A sacred and nameless fervor dwelt in those tones, which at times trembled forth, hardly audible, like a mysterious whisper upon the waters and then welled up again, gruesomely sweet, like the sound of hunting horns in the moonlight, and finally rushed along in unchecked jubilation, as though a thousand bards were sweeping their harp-strings and raising their voices in a chant of triumph. They were sounds which the ear never hears, but only the heart may dream, when it rests at night against the heart of the beloved. Perhaps, too, the heart understands them in bright daylight, when it steps itself with an outcry of joy in the lines of beauty and the ovals of a Grecian work of art . . . ”

SOURCES

G. Conestabile, "Vita di Niccolò Paganini"; J.-G. Prod'homme, "Paganini"; Josef von Wasiliewski, "Die Violine und ihre Meister"; S. S. Stratton, "Niccolò Paganini, His life and Works"; K. F. Guhr, "Über Paganinis Kunst die Violine zu spielen"; Fétis, "Notice Biographique sur Paganini"; O. G. Sonneck, "Heinrich Heine's Musical Feuilletons" ("Musical Quarterly", Jan. 1922; Trans. w. connecting text by Frederick H. Martens).

GLOSSARY

- CAGLIOSTRO**—Allesandro, Count Cagliostro (Giuseppe Balsamo) an Italian alchémist and imposter (1743-1795) who visited London and Paris in 1771, selling love-philtres, elixirs of youth, alchemistic powders, etc. He was tried and condemned as a heretic in Rome (1789) but his death sentence was commuted to perpetual imprisonment.
- CARMAGNOLE**—A wild and savage Revolutionary air, of Piedmontese origin, composed in 1792, and danced and sung by the French Jacobins. It was a favorite march in the Revolutionary armies, but Napoleon forbade it when he became First Consul.
- COUNT OF SAINT-GERMAIN**—A famous adventurer (c. 1710 - c. 1780), known as "The Wonderman", a follower of the secret sciences, a capable violinist, who claimed to have the secret of prolonging life—he claimed he had lived some 2,000 years—and of turning base metals into gold. A reputed mystic and freemason, he was influential at several European courts.
- JULIAN THE APOSTATE**—A Roman emperor (331-363) who cast off the Christian faith in which he was born to avow paganism. He endeavored to discredit Christianity throughout the empire and reintroduce the worship of the gods of Greece and Rome.
- LIPINSKI**—Karl Joseph (1790-1861) celebrated violinist, noted for the breadth of his playing. An opera, many pieces and the well-known "Military Concerto" for violin are among his works.
- LAFONT**—Charles Philippe (1781-1839), pupil of Kreutzer, succeeded Rode as chamber-virtuoso in Petrograd; lived in Paris from 1815 on as Court Violinist.

LOCATELLI—Pietro Locatelli (1693-1746) was famous for his double-stopping and the effects he produced by changing the tuning of his violin. His numerous works contain the innovations by which Paganini profited.

ORDER OF THE GOLDEN SPUR—The Papal Order of the Golden Spur was founded by His Holiness Pope Paul IV, as a military body, in 1559, though tradition assigns its foundation to Constantine the Great and Pope Sylvester. It was reorganized as an Order of Merit by Pope Gregory XVI in 1841. Gluck and Mozart are among the famous musicians who were knights of this Order. In 1905 the Order was divided into three classes and a separate Order, that of the "Golden Spur" or "Golden Legion" (*Militia Aurata*) established in one class, with a membership limited to a hundred knights.

SIROCCO—The simoon, or wind for the great Sahara desert, is known as the sirocco when it reaches the northern shore of the Mediterranean.

SIVORI—Ernesto Camillo (1815-1894). This pupil of Paganini's was a remarkable interpreter of his teacher's works. He made concert tours in the United States, Central and South America in 1846-8, and wrote many compositions for his instrument, which are now forgotten.

For current musical terms the student is referred to Tom S. Wotton's "Dictionary of Foreign Musical Terms and Orchestral Instruments."

LIST OF PAGANINI'S WORKS.

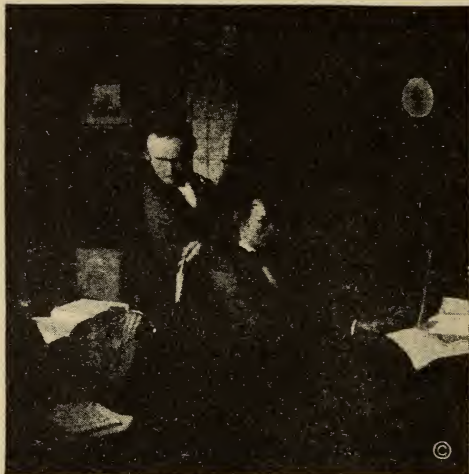
- Opus 1. 24 Caprices for Violin.
 " 2. Sonata for Violin and Guitar.
 " 3. Sonata for Violin and Guitar.
 " 4-5. Three Quartets for Violin, Viola, Cello and
 Guitar.
 " 6. Concerto in Eb major.
 " 7. Concerto in B minor. La Campanella with
 Rondo: A la Clochette.
 " 8. Le Streghe. Variation on theme by S. Mayr.
 " 9. Variation on God Save the King.
 " 10. Il Carnevale di Venezia. 20 Variations.
 " 11. Allegro Moto perpetuo.
 " 12. Variation on Non piu mesta.
 " 13. Variation on Di tanti palpiti.

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Oriental Romance |
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Exhaltation | 22. Plotenyi, La Gioja |
| 8. Karganoff, Mazurka | 23. Russian Folk-Tune, "Ma-
touska Goloboushka" |
| 9. Karganoff,
In the Gondola | 24. Mozart, Adagio |
| 10. Nemerowsky,
Alla Mazurka | 25. Mozart, Pantomime |
| 11. Tschaikowsky,
Christmas | 26. Mozart, Andantino
molto grazioso |
| 12. Tschaikowsky,
Humoresque | 27. Lack, Arietta (Quasi
Gavotto) |
| 13. Vivaldi, Largo | 28. Mozart, Andante and
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